



**THE CITY OF MIRAMAR
PARKS & RECREATION
ADVISORY BOARD ANNUAL RETREAT MINUTES**

August 24, 2024

8:00 A.M.

The City of Miramar's Parks & Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) met for its annual retreat on Saturday, August 24, 2024, at 8:26 a.m. at the Residence Inn by Marriott – Miramar, Cabana Conference Room, Main Floor, 14700 Hotel Road, Miramar, Florida 33027.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. ATTENDANCE - BOARD MEMBERS**

The following members of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board were present:

Dr. Yelena Revere, Chairperson
Lair Hall, Vice Chairperson (Late)
Ian Excell
Carlister Gordon
Nichola Officer
Synthia Parchment-Green
Carlos Ramsay
Joshua Rhodes
Sherria Williams

The following member of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board was absent:

Abdool Gani

A quorum was achieved.

Staff present:

Billy Neal, Director, Parks & Recreation (P&R)
Jacqueline Lovell-Santos, Dept. Coordinator, P&R
Dorothy ??

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **July 22, 2024**

Ms. Parchment-Green made a motion to approve the minutes of July 22, 2024, as presented, seconded by Mr. Rhodes. The motioned passed unanimously.

5. AUGUST RETREAT

- College Fair – October 12th, 2024, Miramar Amphitheater
 - Planning of layout and logistics: Jessica Williams – South Promo (unable to attend)

Chairperson Revere indicated the guest speaker was unable to attend the retreat due to a prior commitment. The College Fair event was still taking place. Mr. Neal told her it was fine to bring the Junkanoo with Sound event, for which she had 500 toys; PRAB members could get bicycles donated to give older children. She said the giveaways would be done at the Vernon E. Hargray Youth Enrichment Center (YEC). It was now necessary to come up with a date.

Ms. Lovell-Santos pointed the fiscal year (FY) 2025 calendar had no Breakfast with Santa event in December 2024; there was a tree lighting event December 6, 2024, at Shirley Branca Park, and another on December 7. Dates were open, so she would check with special events staff if Commissioner Chambers was doing his Breakfast with Santa event; a date for the event needed to be selected.

Chairperson Revere suggested Saturday, December 14, 2024.

Ms. **4:43 audio 1** asked if staff could ask other members of the Commission if they wished to partner on the event.

Chairperson Revere mentioned Mr. Neal telling her members of the Commission held their own Christmas event each year; she said Parks & Recreation and the PRAB could do an event of their own with no Commission sponsor.

Ms. **5:17 audio 1** wondered if it were possible to put boxes at city parks to collect toy donations.

Mr. Neal affirmed it was possible.

Mr. Rhodes suggested staff ask some of the usual sponsors of city events if they would consider donating bicycles.

Mr. Neal pointed out in Miramar all events used the same sponsors, such as Sam's Club, Target, etc.

Ms. **Williams 6:27 audio 1** stated thought the board could use the funds normally used to purchase ICEEs, etc. that the EDAB sold as some city events.

Ms. Lovell-Santos said she would check the balance of the board's account.

Ms. Williams thought bikes could cost \$50.00 to \$120.00; board members had a few months to donate a bike, or get someone to donate a bike on their behalf.

Chairperson Revere noted instead of bikes the board could give the children a \$25.00 Amazon gift card, to which the board members concurred. She asked if the giveaway event should be placed on Eventbrite.

Ms. Williams asked if it was possible to just invite the children in the City's summer and winter camp programs.

Mr. Neal agreed, pointing out 500 toys might not go very far if the whole community was invited; the board voiced agreement. His staff would inform parents of the need to register for the event on Eventbrite.

Chairperson Revere thought the giveaway could become an annual event for the PRAB.

Ms. Williams suggested staff send the Eventbrite notice at the beginning of November, so by the time of the board's November meeting it would be possible to gauge the number of expected attendees.

Chairperson Revere presented Ms. Parchment-Green with a plaque on behalf of the PRAB, thanking her for her years of serving on the board as its chairperson, and for making sure the City's residents were taken care of.

Ms. Parchment-Green thanked the board, adding that without the efforts of Dr. Revere, the board might not have accomplished it all it had to date.

Chairperson Revere presented Mr. Neal with a plaque on the board's behalf to express their gratitude for the excellent working relationship the PRAB members

and she had with Mr. Neal and his staff since he was appointed as director of the Parks Department. His willingness to work with the PRAB not only raised community awareness of the board, but facilitated and enabled the board to become more involved in serving Miramar residents, and this included the City Commission's becoming very aware of the PRAB and its work.

Mr. Neal affirmed the PRAB was one of the few city advisory boards that did anything. Once the board gave its presentation at a commission meeting, the Mayor asked the City Manager to direct all advisory boards to give a similar report to the Commission. He said the Commission was fully aware of the PRAB's existence, and that it was one of the hardest working city boards, and they were fully aware the Parks & Recreation Department was the spear that ran the City, as his staff and he were called upon by all other city departments to help with their events and initiatives; it was their job to help other departments connect with the Miramar residents. Mr. Neal thanked the PRAB for believing in him, as it facilitated others in the City believing in him, clearly showing what could be achieved if they worked with him.

Chairperson Revere thanked Mr. Rhodes for continuing to forward great ideas, and using his experience in parks and recreation to help guide the board. The current team of PRAB members was a good team.

Mr. Neal concurred, stating his staff and he were there to assist the PRAB achieve its goals, helping to bring their ideas to fruition.

Chairperson Revere presented Ms. Lovell-Santos with a plaque to express the PRAB's gratitude for her constant, unstinting support and help with all things the PRAB sought to do; it was an absolute pleasure working with her. She was an important part of Mr. Neal's department accomplishing all it did.

Mr. Neal mentioned Ms. Lovell-Santos was offered a position in the City Manager's Office, which she declined to take, preferring to remain with his department; she had the department's and his back.

Chairperson Revere presented certificates of appreciation to board members for choosing to serve their city via volunteering to serve on the PRAB.

PRAB members each expressed thanks and appreciation for Dr. Revere's service, and for all that she brought to the PRAB and Miramar, concurring with the well-deserved plaque presentations on their behalf. They felt blessed to be a part of such a great team, and looked forward to the PRAB doing so much more; it was no coincidence, as board members had a mutual respect for each other.

Mr. Excell understood from earlier board discussion that the PRAB wished to host its own Christmas event, commenting that this did not mean each board member could not contact their appointing commissioner for funding assistance.

Chairperson Revere remarked, as Vice Mayor Davis would no longer be a Miramar city commissioner in December, it would be good to get the PRAB's events on her list of events, as she was present at most of the board's initiatives. Her replacement could become familiar the initiatives she supported.

Ms. **Williams 53:38** said she would include the college fair, and any other PRAB event scheduled in November and December on the board's calendar for when the board made its pitch for her funding support.

Ms. Lovell-Santos mentioned the need for the board to decide on the use of its funds, whether for the college fair, and/or other events, and how this would be done. The registration for the college fair could be crafted based on the board's wishing its events benefited Miramar residents primarily; that is, when anyone registering was identified as a Miramar resident, their name was automatically flagged as being eligible to receive a gift, such as a laptop, iPad, etc.

Mr. Rhodes recalled someone at a prior event willing to donate free laptops.

Ms. Lovell-Santos said the Burger & Brew Fest would take place on September 27, 2024, at the Miramar Armory.

Mr. Rhodes suggested, since the PRAB had nothing to actually give out, there could be a board presence to promote the PRAB's upcoming events/programs.

Chairperson Revere remarked on wishing the PRAB to do an annual fundraising, signature, banquet event to fund the Parks Department awarding scholarships to Miramar's collegebound students, particularly those who went through Parks programs. If not scholarships, they could get useful items, such as: a laptop, microwave, small refrigerator, and living supplies: blankets, sheets, towels, etc.

Mr. Rhodes added whenever the board raised funds from an initiative, or received a donation to fund PRAB programming, some of the funds could be placed in a special account to fund scholarships, etc. The board could set scholarship levels for monetary donations, as there were many children coming through Miramar's summer and winter programs.

Chairperson Revere concurred, board members should solicit donations year round, not just for specific PRAB events.

Ms. Lovell-Santos said the board could add this new initiative to its report to the Commission to get their support.

Chairperson Revere mentioned students nearing graduation who were going on to college or other education would be asked to fill out a form to be eligible to receive the abovementioned benefits. For the actual distribution of items, proof of Miramar residency was needed, and Miramar police officers could be asked to help, as parents could get belligerent when asked to prove residency. She said with proof of residency established, the items could then be loaded into car trunks, as they were with the board's food drives, and other giveaway events. The items were essentials new students needed when going off to college.

Mr. Rhodes agreed, as even those who received scholarships from other sources, that funding sometimes did not kick in until weeks after college started. The board should get this on the calendar as soon as possible, and commissioners canvassed for funding support, so they can place it on their calendar of events for the new fiscal year beginning October 1, 2024.

Ms. Williams wondered if a board member could undertake doing an estimated budget for the event, and make sure it was in the board's October report. Getting Commission support would allow the board to order items, such as sheets, blankets, towels, etc. in bulk.

Ms. Lovell-Santos commented that the first event might have to wait until FY 2026, as Commission budgets for FY 2025 were already finalized, unless individual commissioners had funding they could dedicate to the board's request.

Mr. Rhodes thought each commissioner could be asked to see if they could donate any of their funding to the event, as spending was at their discretion.

Chairperson Revere noted the City had relationships with vendors, whereby, staff could approach them with regard to getting a good price on a bulk order of items.

Mr. Hall agreed with drafting a budget, both for the fundraising event, and do an estimate of the possible cost of the items the board wished to give out. It was important to see if the initiative was sustainable. The Commission's involvement facilitated corporate involvement that was essential to the initiative's success; the PRAB might have to start small for the first event, growing in subsequent years.

Chairperson Revere thought the board members should present the event to the City Commission, letting them know their funding would be welcome in general, or for specific items they wished to donate.

Ms. Williams proposed the board members have all the budgets drafted for review at the board's September meeting.

Ms. Lovell-Santos said she would email board members a budget template to plug in the numbers of the various budgets; it would be in a format the members of the Commission were accustomed to seeing.

Ms. Williams stated she would draft the budget for the college trunks.

Ms. **Parchment-Green ? 1:24:13** agreed to do the gift card budget for the Junkanoo with Sound event.

Mr. Hall thought it would be useful for the board to invite members of the Commission to attend a monthly PRAB meeting to raise their awareness of the board, and its initiatives.

Mr. Gordon thought the Commission was already well aware of the board, and its work, as they had already been included in hosting various initiatives.

Ms. Officer suggested after the board did its September presentation to the Commission, it could be suggested that each member of the Commission attend a future board meeting.

Ms. Lovell-Santos mentioned the **Colgate 1:27:25** was already booked for August 2025; it was done early enough for the summer campaign; the event would be placed on Eventbrite, and open for Miramar residents only. Even though participants filled out the forms, they would be vetted for income; all the YEC children already qualified. At the 2024 event, some 40 children benefited.

Chairperson Revere felt grateful for the 40 children who were helped, and she hoped it was possible to do a winter event opened only to Miramar children who fell in the low-income bracket, thereby helping more Miramar children.

Ms. Lovell-Santos said some parents had difficulty filling out the very detailed form.

Ms. Parchment-Green thought city staff could offer assistance to fill in the forms.

Ms. Lovell-Santos affirmed this was possible on the day the parents came in to sign up; children from other city sites were bussed to the YEC, where the largest number of children who qualified were located.

Mr. Rhodes suggested using a sample form to explain to parents how to fill it out.

Ms. Williams agreed with the need to help parents fill out the form, which board members could volunteer to do. Parents also need help in the uniform drive to ensure they were selecting the proper sizes for their child.

Chairperson Revere urged board members to capitalize on their relationships with Commission members to get their help on PRAB events, programs, etc.

- Commission Meeting Presentation – October 16th
 - Outline of presentation
 - Presenter

Ms. Lovell-Santos noted she would create a draft PowerPoint board report, and email it to board members for their feedback, it would include a wrap up, with slides showing the board's FY 2024 events, and she would leave the FY 2025 coming events portion open for board members to fill in the events they wished the Commission to focus on giving their support; any budgets the board created could be included in the presentation. She wondered if the college fair date of October 12th should be pushed back.

Ms. Parchment-Green felt it should, as she was already obligated to attend an event on that date as the president of that group.

Chairperson Revere suggested the alternate date of October 19 or 26.

Ms. Lovell-Santos said she would confirm the availability of the Regional Park for those two dates, so the board could choose. She asked if the PRAB would partner with Commissioner Barnes on the college fair.

Chairperson Revere wondered if it were possible to have a bag with PRAB printed on it that attendees could use to place items they collected at board events, and other city events that the board had a presence.

Ms. Lovell-Santos showed the board examples of bags the Commission and other had for their events, for which she received the board's confirmation.

Chairperson Revere questioned the possibility of having a radio station at the college fair doing a live broadcast.

Ms. Lovell-Santos pointed out, as Commissioner Barnes was co-hosting the event, the college fair could be advertised at the radio station where he worked. She added once the college fair date was solidified, then the flyer could be created for dissemination. She would email the board when the date was

confirmed, which included her confirming Commission Barnes's availability.

Chairperson Revere mentioned the need to get the flyer out to BRACE (Broward Advisors for Continuing Education) advisors. She started the scholarship bulletin for August, and it was ready to be pushed out, and it would be sent out on a monthly basis.

Ms. Lovell-Santos asked if the board wished to do something with Reggie Taylor, since he was involved in mentoring scholarship initiatives; Dr. Revere could attend one of his events one Saturday to give out the board's event information.

Discussion on whether to send the scholarship flyer to BRACE advisors in Miramar high schools only, versus all BRACE advisors; they should be sent to the charter schools in Miramar as well, as they did not have BRACE advisors. There was agreement the board would start with partnering with Miramar High School, Everglades High School, and Somerset Academy. The PRAB could conduct a full-day scholarship workshop to which would be invited students and parents of Miramar who attended one of the three schools; the venue of the workshop would be ChristWay Baptist Church in Miramar.

Mr. Excell said he would confirm a date with the church, and let the board know; he knew their education committee met on Friday evening.

Recess/Reconvene

Chairperson Revere restated her strong commitment to helping young people realize their potential, and giving them guidance on how to get better educated, so they could get better jobs with higher salaries.

Mr. Gordon agreed board members needed to become trained in imparting such knowledge, so they could be deeply involved in helping the City's youths with furthering their education to improve their job and earning prospects. There were numerous young people in need of such guidance, and hope.

Mr. Neal noted board members could impart their knowledge at a variety of events, including some hosted by the Miramar/Pembroke Pines Chamber of Commerce.

Ms. Lovell-Santos noted this could be added to the board's September 16th presentation to the Commission.

Mr. Excell stated ChristWay was situated near numerous residential communities, with many parents attending the church, greatly enabling the ability

to disseminate information to them about getting help with meeting their children's education needs when they graduated high school. He needed something to present to the educators at the church who organized education initiatives. Anything parents could do to help ease the stress their children experienced at school should be done, while encouraging and facilitating them on their school education journey.

Chairperson Revere looked forward to work with the board on a team effort, noting Ms. Williams could provide help educating students on the social media portion, as colleges looked at applying students' social media accounts.

Ms. Williams asked if the City had any programs that hired students.

Mr. Neal answered yes; the City had an internship program, in which high school students were hired to work in city departments during summer.

Chairperson Revere mentioned Broward's Junior Achievers program.

Ms. Lovell-Santos stated the City tried working with that program for 2024 for three students, but staff found it somewhat disorganized, and only one Miramar student went through the program. Because the coordinator at the County working with city staff was not very responsive, and this resulted in the missing of numerous deadlines to get the children on board.

Chairperson Revere said she had a contact with Broward's Junior Achievers program, and she would send Mr. Neal their name the following Monday.

Ms. Lovell-Santos added that the Junior Achievers was to place students citywide toward the various departments, and the City would do the administration.

Mr. Neal pointed out Parks needed to find out if the issue was with the City's HR staff or with the Junior Achievers contact, and go from there.

Chairperson Revere commented on partnering with such organizations, so they could help with such areas as financial literacy for students.

Ms. Williams suggested adding to the PRAB's calendar some type of leadership academy for Miramar students, tenth grade to seniors; the program could be opened to the first 30 children. The participants could be charged with creating a project related to parks and recreation; they could be pulled from Miramar students already built into the PRAB's scholarship program. She said those who showed themselves at leaders could be invited to help with some of the PRAB's

initiatives, and they could, in turn, later benefit as recipients of the PRAB's scholarship program.

Ms. Lovell-Santos noted for the board's September 23 meeting, there would be a presentation by **Pauline ? 23:29 audio 2** for **?? 23:33** grant.

Mr. Neal clarified this was a matching grant the City received for upgrading park equipment.

Ms. Lovell-Santos added part of the grant process was to make a presentation to the PRAB, after which a presentation was made at a public meeting.

Chairperson Revere urged board members to forward any ideas on initiatives/programs the PRAB could do to Ms. Lovell-Santos, so they could be put on the board's meeting agenda for discussion. The board needed to form a committee for the planning of the college banquet. She would email ideas of venues, dates, etc. to Ms. Lovell-Santos, so she could send them to the other board members for discussion at the next meeting. Each member of the Commissioner, the City Manager, and each board member could sponsor a table at the banquet.

Mr. Rhodes mentioned he would contact persons in the field of event catering, decorations, etc. for their help. He asked if the City had facility space for use by nonprofit organizations.

Mr. Neal answered yes.

- 2024-2025 Event Participation Calendar

Discussed above.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

The next meeting would be Monday, September 23, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:49 a.m.



Dr. Yelena Revere, Chairperson
YR/cp